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ABSTRACT

Sixteen readings dating from 1854 through 1969, many of which are primary materials excerpted from dated Minnesota newspapers, are intended for fifth grade students. Five themes describe past and present conditions in the Red River Valley: 1) show the importance of fur trade and describe the wooden carts in the train that carried the trade; 2) present attempts that were made to publicize advantages in the area, making it easy and attractive for immigrants to settle in the valley; 3) describe sod dwellings used by the early settlers in Minnesota; 4) give agricultural statistics on changes in wheat production from 1910 through 1970, and crop production from 1910 through 1960; and, 5) portray present day Red River Valley, listing types of businesses found in the area and describing the cities of Crookston and Moorhead. Related documents are: SO 002 729 through SO 002 732. (SJM)

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Grade Five
Unit: Red River Valley

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SELECTED READINGS

SO 002 733

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I. THE FUR TRADE ERA

1. From the St. Anthony Express, Saturday, March 11, 1854

Furs of Minnesota

---The Buffalo is the monarch... in the Territory. Immense herds of these animals range the vast prairies extending from the Mississippi to the Missouri. The luxuriant meadows furnish them with abundant.../food/ the year round.... several hundred thousand in a drove were seen by Governor Stevens and his party the last summer, on his survey of the Northern Pacific Rail Road route. Two days were required to pass some droves, from which it may be.../guessed/that they were from forty to fifty miles in length, extending on either side as far as the eye could reach. Some of the mules and horses, getting mingled in the droves, it was found impossible to retake them, and they were lost. The existence of these tremendous herds adds a new feature of interest to the northern route. Only think of the amateur sportsmen thundering over those boundless prairies, at the rate of forty miles an hour, and picking off with his rifle, a score or two of fine bulls, without leaving his seat in the cars!

. . . .

The average price of buffalo robes in the Territory is about four dollars wholesale, and seven or eight retail. Very large black robes sometimes bring as high as ten dollars each.

. . . .

Deer are found in great abundance in every part of the Territory. During the winter season we are usually well supplied with venison. The present season there has been less than usual. The best haunches are worth from 8 to 10 cents per pound, and properly cooked, are a dish for an epicure.

Their skins are valuable for a great variety of uses, and are neatly dressed by the Indians, and manufactured into a great variety of useful and ornamental articles. Among these some of the most common are hunting shirts, breeches, moccasins, leggins, bags, pouches, belts, etc., forming for all these purposes, a warm comfortable and durable

garment and material. Deer skins vary in price per pound, according to weight. An ordinary skin weighing from eight to ten pounds, is worth from eleven to fifteen cents per pound, while one weighing 12 or 15 pounds is worth 25 cents per pound. They will average about fifteen cents.

2. From the Daily Minnesota Pioneer, July 2, 1855

THE RED RIVER TRAIN

Quite a curious...scene was presented last Saturday on Robert Street, in front of Forbes and Kittson's store. The street was literally blocked up with the.../old/ wooden carts of the train from the Selkirk settlement; horses and cattle, with all sorts of...harnesses upon them, were tethered round about, buffalo robes lay piled upon the grounds, and a busy crowd of the dark skinned strangers were moving busily to and fro, earnestly engaged in the work of loading up the carts from the warehouse. Even to those somewhat.../used/ to those semi-annual visitors, the sight.../was/ a novelty, and in a stranger it could not but awaken a lively interest and curiosity. There is something so odd in all the arrangements they have for travel; things are so rough...in appearance as to seem utterly unfit for the purpose to which they are applied, that it requires a little examination...to show that it is about the best that could be adopted for the long...journey of over six hundred miles....

3. From the St. Paul Daily Press, Tuesday, June 27, 1865

The van of the Red River train, thirty-five carts, loaded with furs, arrived yesterday. About one hundred more carts are on their way down, and will soon arrive. Since the completion of the St. Paul & Pacific Railroad to Elk River...few carts come all the way to St. Paul, as it is cheaper and much more convenient to unload at the.../end/of the rail-

road , send their furs down by rail and receive their supplies the same way in return.

4. From the St. Paul Daily Pioneer, October 14, 1865 - Reprinted from the St. Cloud Democrat

Another large train of Red River carts passed through this place on last Monday, and each cart was...loaded down with robes and furs. This train, for some reason or another, did not unload its freight at this place, (St. Cloud), as is usually the case, but passed through.../to go to/Elk River. The almost unearthly creaking of the carts is highly amusing to the many strangers in our place, who gazed upon a Red River cart for the first time. We imagine if these strangers were trying to write...for some newspaper, they would...ask why the owners of.../the/ carts don't grease their axles more and their clothing less.

5. From the Minneapolis Daily Tribune, July 14, 1867

The unique carts and rigs of a Red River train have much about them to claim the attention of the stranger. Yesterday we saw a number of them on the streets. The single poor ox harnessed into the two-wheeled wooden cart is something so ancient or rather so rude, in appearance, that one cannot but stop and look at them. They are loading to return to the Red River Country.

6. From the Pioneer Democrat Weekly, August 12, 1858.

....The importance of the Trade (fur) at this time (1855) seemed to demand a special depot at St. Paul, and accordingly in this year, the firm of Forbes & Kittson was organized....

From the statistics published in the St. Paul Advertiser of December 21st, 1857, we learn that the total value of the furs which passed through St.

Paul houses that year...amounted to $180,000--of which at least two-thirds, or $120,000, was the product of the Red River Valley. This year, owing to the partial failure of the Buffalo--the most important crop of furs--the receipts are lighter, and will not perhaps exceed $100,000. But the carts which are laden with furs form but a small part of the immense caravans which now annually set out from the Red River Colony to St. Paul. The loaded carts, of the five hundred which recently arrived at St. Paul, did not exceed one-fourth of the whole number. The rest arrived empty, and returned to the settlement laden with merchandise, purchased--not by exchanges of furs--but by direct outlays of money.

....These carts--afford a valuable measure of growth of the trade. In 1844 the carts which accompanied Mr. Kittson to Mendota to convey the results of his first season's business at Pembine, were only six in number. In 1853 the aggregate arrivals are currently stated at six hundred.

7. From the Minnesota Democrat, St. Paul, July 22, 1851

We have been out to see the camp of a part of the Red River train, about 20 carts and 12 men, that arrived in advance of the main body on Thursday last. They are encamped near the St. Anthony Road, about 2 1/2 miles from town. The whole company left Selkirk on the 4th of June. As we stated last week the entire train consists of 102 carts, drawn chiefly by oxen that are hitched up very much like horses, wearing a collar, instead of a yoke....

The Red River carts are curiosities. In most of them there is not a particle of iron, the fastenings being made of wooden pins, and thongs of buffalo hides. A few of them only have small iron bands around the hubs. There is one ox to each cart, and the load is usually about a thousand pounds. They are very light and will float in water. They

are easily drawn over new, or rather, wild roads, are readily repaired and therefore... /better than/ any other sort for such an expedition. When a number of heavy laden carts are in company, they are... /taken/ across streams on hastily constructed rafts. When few, or light, the wheels are taken off, laid on a buffalo hide, or two or three sewed together, and made water tight, the stiff hide is then drawn up and tied so as to form a canoe, the wheels... /become/ the frame work of the bottom. This hide canoe will float 1000 to 1200 pounds of freight. A canoe of this kind is... /made/ in a few minutes.

About one-half of the carts in this train belong to residents this side of the line -- chiefly to Mr. Kittson, or rather the American Fur Company of which he is a partner. The other half is the property of different persons who belong to Selkirk, and in this way come... /each year/ to exchange buffalo robes, clothing made from buffalo skins, moccasins, etc., buffalo tongues and pemmican, for groceries, stoves and hardware chiefly, as well as for other merchandise.

The people of Red River -- who are mostly half-breeds rely mainly upon the buffalo chase for their exports and prosperity. The failure of the crop would... /mean disaster/ They have two summer hunts; they start on the first about the 10th of June, the second the 10th of August. The party usually consists of from 600 to 700 men with their families, the women and older children of which are employed in cutting up and drying the meat. They take with them from 1300 to 1400 ox carts, each of which will hold the product of from nine to ten buffaloes. The best meat is obtained in the fall, when the buffalo is in fine condition. The hunting plains are very... /large/ reaching to the Missouri River. The buffalo has but little hair in the summer -- the skin is then valuable only to be... /changed/ into dressed hides. The robes are... /taken/ in the winter, when the hunters go out with flat sleds made of

thin boards 26 to 28 inches wide, and 15 or 16 feet long, turned up at the ... /front/, which are drawn by horses or dogs. Three dogs will draw a sled bearing a load of 700 to 800 pounds.

8 Data on Arrivals of Red River carts at St. Paul*

1844	6	1858	600
1851	102	1863	275
1857	500		

*Data taken from Robinson, Edward V., Economic History of Agriculture in Minnesota.

II. CAMPAIGN FOR IMMIGRANTS

1. Excerpts from a letter from Paul Hjelm-Hanson to the Norwegians back home. Hjelm-Hanson was hired to publicize the Red River Valley.

July 31, 1869

Having returned from the Red River, I hasten to send you a few lines in order that you may know that I have not fallen into the hands of Indians, half-breeds, buffaloes, bears, or other such uncivilized beings....I find myself in the best of health.

I have made a journey...into the wilderness, with oxen and a farm wagon. I have spent the nights in the open wagon with a buffalo hide as mattress, a hundred-pound flour sack as a pillow, and ...the "blue sky" as a tent. On bad roads I have been thrown from one side of the wagon to the other. Occasionally, when going over sticks and stones, I have been thrown up in the air to fall down again on the hard wagon planks. I have been so tortured and tormented by mosquitoes that I have had to sit upright in the wagon throughout the night unceasingly beating the air with my handkerchief to guard myself against these little creatures which are so greedy for human blood.

Nevertheless,...I have enjoyed good health as never before. In twelve days spent under the open sky on Minnesota's high plains,...I have become free of my rheumatism, and in place of it I have gained physical strength and a cheerful disposition. In that respect alone I benefited greatly from this trip. In truth, the air here is just as wondrously invigorating as the land is beautiful and fruitful....

....The whole prairie, which does not have the slightest bulge or rise, is the most fertile land one could wish. It consists of rich black soil with a slight.../mixture/of sand on.../top/of clay. On this prairie there is room for several thousand farmers. The woods are largely composed of elm,

ash, and oak trees....

....it is not only my opinion but that of all who have seen this part of the country, that it presents so many advantages for Scandinavian farmers that immigrants are likely to stream in here within the next year, that this tract of land will in ten years be built up and under cultivation and that it will then become one of the richest and most beautiful regions in America. The soil is fertile to the highest degree and is.../very/ easy to cultivate, for there is not as much as a stone or a stump in the way of the plow. Woods are to be found in great quantities along the rivers. Railroads are to run through the middle of the whole long valley. Steamships already come up from the British possessions to Georgetown and will in a few years probably come up much farther. The sale of farm products to the forts and Hudson Bay will become.../very/ profitable. The water power in the rivers on both sides of the prairie is more than.../enough/for all kinds of factories. And the climate is exceptionally healthful. In the summer months, May, June, July, and August, the heat may at times be great, but the .../air/ is always fresh. In September and October, the weather is usually very pleasant. Winter sets in in November with about the same degree of cold as in western Norway, and it continues, as a rule, into March. In the wintertime, the snow is usually two or three feet deep and lies in a solid mass over the whole prairie so that roads may be made wherever one may wish. Spring work commences the latter part of March or the first part of April, and harvesting begins the latter part of July or the first part of August.

From my impression of the country, I have the hope that a good many of my countrymen, the Scandinavians, will come up here to settle on the tract of land which lies between Fort Abercrombie and Georgetown, especially along the rivers on both sides of the prairie. A man can take 160 acres of homestead land, and, if he has the opportunity to do so, he can in addition buy 160 acres for $200. With an area of 320 acres of this land, every family

...can make a comfortable livelihood....

....In connection with the problem of settlement, it should not be overlooked that a part of this land at times of overflow is subject to floods. In the last twenty years, however, I am told that there has been only one flood, and that two years ago when there were floods in many other parts of Minnesota as well as here. If people were to refrain from settling on places subject to such catastrophies in nature, which surrounds us all, the largest and most fertile parts of the earth would lie desolate....

2. Comparative data on the climate of western Norway and the Red River Valley:

Western coast of Norway has mild winters and cool summers.

	Rainfall	Average Temperature	
		January	July
Oslo	23 inches	24	63
Bergen	81 inches	34	58
Trondheim	31 inches	27	57
N. Dakota-east	22 inches	8	70
Minnesota	21 inches	6	70

3. Railroad's Efforts to Get Immigrants*

Agents like Mattson who worked abroad often sold transportation to...emigrants, issuing tickets for the entire journey from.../their home/ to Minnesota to avoid any possible mistake in.../where they would go/. The railroads did everything they could to make it easy and inexpensive for recent

*From Heilbron, The 32nd State. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1958.

arrivals from lands across the Atlantic to reach the West. Among the.../things/ offered to Minnesota bound immigrants were reduced rates both on ships and railways. Some Minnesota roads allowed settlers to.../subtract/travel expenses from the price of any lands they purchased; others transported newcomers with their families, stock and personal property at half the regular rates. As a result.., an emigrating Norwegian could make the entire journey from his homeland to Chicago for less than fifty dollars in the late 1860's.

Europeans who took advantage of these low rates continued to receive special treatment after reaching Minnesota. Upon arrival at a railroad division point, a newcomer found...an immigrants' reception house, where he was given shelter and a chance to buy food and even clothing at cost while he looked for land in the vicinity.

III. SOD HOUSE DAYS

1. Living in a Sod House*

The first house that was really our own was a sod hut. It was built in 1870 and we lived in it for several years. A double wall of sod was put up and loose dirt poured in between to make it solid. There were dirt walls, dirt ceiling, dirt floors with dry hay for rugs, and two small glass windows. The benches were of logs split and legs fastened on with wooden pegs. The table was made to fold against the wall when more space was needed. Then there were cupboards with shelves and an iron stove with a bake oven. This was the only article that was purchased outright. The trundle bed had a compartment like a drawer underneath that could be pulled out for an extra bed. Flat beds were made on the floor until the last one could hardly find room to stand while undressing.

The worst of the sod hut was the spring thaw. A person would hear a little jar here and a little jar there in the earth. Pretty soon it was tr-tr-tr, and the next thing a gopher came through. Then there was a merry chase around and around until it ended up worst for the gopher. The fright given by an occasional snake was much harder on human beings. Snakes in Norway were poisonous and people lived in deathly fear of the American ones, too.

2. Building Sod Houses**

Sod houses and sod dugouts were the most primitive types of dwelling used by the early settlers in Minnesota, and these shelters were used only where lack of timber prevented the construction of anything more elaborate. For building the walls of a sod house, pieces of sod a foot wide, a foot and a half long, and four inches thick were dug on the prairie,

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*An account by a Red River Valley farmer. Reported in Blegen, With Various Voices.

**From Rodney C. Loehr, Minnesota Farmers' Diaries, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1939, pp. 13-14.

and, after being placed in position, were secured with mortar composed of white clay mixed with buffalo grass. The roof was formed of poles closely fastened together with willow withes, and was covered with sod. Windows and door frames were cut into the walls with an ax, and the floors were sometimes fashioned from loose boards. Dugouts were made in much the same way, except that the dugout was built into the side of a hill. Heat was furnished by a round, sheet-iron stove, and in the winter, when drifts of snow sometimes completely hid these dwellings, ventilation was obtained through the stovepipe, which protruded high above the roof. Wisps of dry prairie hay twisted into a hard coil were used as fuel, and lasted longer than might be supposed.

3. A Dug-Out Home, 1870*

When Ole Hedman arrived in Cottonwood County in 1870, he dug a hole four feet deep and roofed it over with bark, slough grass, and sod; and most of his neighbors did likewise. These dugouts were fairly waterproof, except in unusually hard rains, when straw was spread over the muddly floor. Families survived in these crude shelters even when winter snows complete covered them. In fact, on the prairies, sod houses were warmer in winter and cooler in summer than wooden shanties. Near Sleepy Eye a Danish family built a sod house large enough to accommodate not only themselves, but their cows and oxen as well. Within it copper utensils brought from Denmark seemed almost out of place. Some houses were built completely of sod while others had sod bricks laid on the outside of frame shacks. The walls of sod barns frequently were three or four feet thick; yet rain, sun, wind, mice, and rotting grass reduced them to piles of dirt in a few years. The suprising thing to us today is not the perishable quality of sod houses, but the fact that people could live in them at all, to say nothing of living in them for years.

From Merrill E. Jarchow, The Earth Brought Forth. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1949, pp. 83-84.

Keeping house in a log cabin or a sod house was no simple matter.

. . . .

One early Minnesotan wrote: "My mother had to do all the cooking on a flat stone on the floor with another standing up behind it. She nearly lost her sight the first winter from the smoke." Often the flickering light from the hearth was the only break in the blackness of night, although most cabins had a supply of candles or their substitutes. If mutton tallow, a candle mold, and a candlewick were available, the housewife could make very acceptable candles. If they were lacking, she had to be satisfied with improvisations. Lard, goose grease, or venison fat could be melted and placed in a dish or a hollowed-out turnip or beet along with a rag wick to make a lamp which "emitted some smoke, much odor and a little light." In 1859 kerosene lamps were on the market and came gradually into use. "We had our first kerosene lamp in '61," related one woman. "We were terrible frightened of it. It did smell terrible but this did not keep us from being very proud of it."

. . . .

Cooking utensils, like everything else, were primitive and few. A large iron pot, a long-handled skillet with an iron lid, a cast-iron teakettle, and a coffee pot were the principal ones. Bread was baked in a skillet placed on a bed of coals, with coals also on the lid to produce an even temperature for the tops and bottoms of the loaves.

. . .14

...in the prairie sections wood was not available. A common substitute was hay twisted into sticks. During extreme cold weather it was no simple task to twist hay fast enough to meet the demands of the roaring fire in the stove. In some dwellings a large stone hay-burning box or furnace, with walls a foot thick, was built into the main room. Hay was fed into the contraption through a fire door opening into a lean-to shed attached to the house. When the walls of the box were warm they heated the whole house.

IV. CHANGES IN WHEAT PRODUCTION

Population and wheat production in Minnesota Red River Valley (Data from Robinson, Agriculture in Minnesota.)*

	Population	Acreage	Bushels Produced	Yield in bushels per acre
1870	400	----	---	-----
1880	23,000	63,000	1,024,000	16
1890	76,000	732,000	9,503,000	14
1900	108,000	1,176,000	16,018,000	14
1910	112,000	725,000	11,006,000	15

Agricultural Statistics--Minnesota Red River Valley

1922 - 1960

(In bushels)

1922**	Acreage	Yield	Production	Wheat Price
Wheat	570,000	16.1	8,320,000	$1.01
Oats	500,000		15,700,000	Wheat 18% of total production
Barley	210,000		5,590,000	
Flax	80,000		710,000	
Potatoes	190,000		15,660,000	
	1,550,000		45,980,000	

*Numbers are rounded off for easier reading.
**Figures unavailable for 1920

1930	Acreage	Yield	Production	Wheat Price
Wheat	360,000	13.0	4,510,000	$1.05
Oats	540,000		13,170,000	Wheat 13% of total production
Barley	450,000		9,560,000	
Flax	130,000		870,000	
Potatoes	120,000		5,970,000	
	1,600,000		34,080,000	
1940				
Wheat	510,000	16.5	8,020,000	$ .956
Oats	500,000		15,260,000	Wheat 19.7% of total production
Barley	360,000		9,490,000	
Flax	240,000		1,730,000	
Potatoes	90,000		6,200,000	
	1,700,000		40,700,000	
1950				
Wheat	520,000	17.2	8,890,000	$2.04
Oats	650,000		21,150,000	Wheat 15% of total production
Barley	470,000		13,640,000	
Flax	330,000		2,910,000	
Potatoes	60,000		11,910,000	
	2,030,000		58,500,000	
1960				
Wheat	500,000	25.0	12,500,000	$1.92
Oats	710,000		31,290,000	Wheat 16.7% of total production
Barley	690,000		19,480,000	
Flax	120,000		1,130,000	
Potatoes	70,000		10,270,000	
	2,090,000		74,720,000	

V. PRESENT-DAY RED RIVER VALLEY

1. Types of businesses found in Red River Valley
(Minnesota Directory of Manufacturers)

Crookston:

American Crystal Sugar Company
Crookston Block Company
Crookston Coca-Cola Company
Crookston Milling Company (livestock and poultry feed, flour)
Crookston Millwork Company
Crookston Times Printing Company (newspaper)
Fort-L-Flow Inc. (fertilizer)
Jiffy Fry Company (frozen french fried potatoes)
Land O'Lakes Creamery
Maves Optical
Minnesota Bean and Pea Company (dried peas, beans, grain)
Red River Alfalfa Company
Sanitary Dairy Products
7-Up

East Grand Forks:

American Crystal Sugar Company
Farmers Elevator Company
Forks Sash & Door Company
King of Spud, Inc.
Mayo's Manufacturing Company (potatoe warehouse equipment)
Northland Chemical Company (fertilizers, insecticides)
Scott's Potato Chip Company
Valley Creamery Inc.

Moorhead:

American Crystal Sugar Company
Burrill Printing Company
Coca Cola
Fairmont Foods (milk, ice cream, etc.)
Minnesota Farm Bureau Service (fertilizers)

Moorhead con't.:

Moorhead Agsco (processes corn)
Rasmussen Woodworking Company
7-Up
Wright Awning Company

2. Description of Crookston and Moorhead*

CROOKSTON--Population 9,000
County Seat of Polk County

The first few families who came to the present site of Crookston arrived in 1871 soon after the railway (now the Great Northern) announced plans to extend its road northward from Glyndon to St. Vincent. The settlers expected a city to be built at the point where the line crossed the Red Lake River and they were not disappointed. Tracks were built to the river in 1872, and soon a settlement grew up there. It was named for William Crooks, chief engineer of the railroad....

Although "hard times" halted railroad building in 1873, business improved a few years later and many newcomers arrived in the river community. In 1878 a large number of French-Canadians moved into the county and many of them settled in the town. Crookston did not have a .../city/ government until 1879. In that year the city was created by a special act of the legislature and was made the county seat of Polk County.

Crookston now has about 9,000 inhabitants. Its business and industry are nearly all based on the livestock and other farm produce raised in the county. They include feed mills, an alfalfa drying plant, grain elevators, potato warehouses, creameries, two dried bean and pea packaging plants, hatcheries, and the state's newest sugar refinery. Crookston is also the home of the annual Red River Valley agricultural exposition.

*Reprinted from Gopher Historian, Fall, 1959.

A wide section of the surrounding countryside depends on Crookston for medical services. The city has two hospitals and a mental health clinic in addition to other medical clinics and a sixty-bed state tuberculosis sanitorium.

MOORHEAD--Population 23,000
County Seat of Clay County

Moorhead, across the Red River from Fargo, North Dakota, is the largest city in the western half of our state. It has a population of more than 23,000, and is the county seat of Clay County.

The town came into being in 1871 when the railway (now the Northern Pacific) built its tracks to the Red River at that point. When it was learned... /about/ where the tracks would cross the stream, settlers and speculators bought land, laid out a village, and set up business establishments. The first locomotive reached Moorhead in December, 1871; the first train arrived a few weeks later, on New Year's Day.

For some years Moorhead was a lively frontier settlement which served mainly as a transfer point for goods and passengers between the Twin Cities and Winnipeg. People traveled to Moorhead by rail or stagecoach and there changed to steamers going north. If the river was too low for steamboats to come upstream that far, they boarded stagecoaches or other conveyances going to the head of navigation farther north. For years, Hudson's Bay Company goods were hauled overland from St. Cloud to Moorhead by oxcarts and there were reloaded onto the river boats.

There was little farming at first near Moorhead, for people did not at once realize the great fertility of the Valley soil. It was generally believed that the prairie land, which had no trees, was too poor to produce crops. Not until 1873 was the first wheat

shipped from Moorhead, and then it was only a few wagonloads.

The depression of 1873 halted railroad building until the late 1870's and not many immigrants came to western Minnesota during those years. After that, however, settlement increased rapidly, bonanza farms were opened, and immense quantities of wheat were sent to the flour mills of Minneapolis. In 1891, five million bushels were raised in the Valley, of which two million came from Clay County.

Moorhead kept pace with the agricultural development in northwestern Minnesota. In 1886, the city had 4,000 residents. In 1888 a state normal school was established there (now Moorhead State College), and in 1891 Concordia Lutheran College was opened.

Today the biggest industry in Moorhead is the refinery of the American Crystal Sugar Company, which makes a hundred million pounds of sugar each year from beets raised in and near Clay County. Other industries of the city include a farm implement factory and other metal fabrication plants, a furniture shop and a concrete products factory.

Wheat has long since ceased to be the main crop of the Red River Valley. The region is now a rich source of a variety of farm produce such as potatoes, barley, wheat, and flax. The area around Moorhead is especially important for the raising of onions. These and other crops are shipped out on the transcontinental lines of the Northern Pacific and the Great Northern which pass through the city.